

CONSERVATION COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

FEBRUARY 2, 2005

PRESENT: Glenn Eberly (Arr. 7:15 pm), James Gage, David Hurley, Walter Moody (Arr. 7:10 pm), Jesse Amsel, and Shawn Costello

ABSENT: None

STAFF

PRESENT: Matt Davis, Town Planner and Reanna Goodreau, Recording Secretary

I. CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Costello called the Ellington Conservation Commission special meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

II. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Discussion of the Conservation Commission's Role in Age-Restricted Cluster Housing Design

Matt Davis, Town Planner, handed out copies of the Age Restricted Cluster Housing Zone (ARCHZ) regulation with a memo dated 1/28/05, and explained the regulation as it applied to the Conservation Commission. He noted that ARCHZ developments are typically common interest communities (not subdivisions), and therefore, the typical 10% open space or fee in-lieu of open space does not apply. Mr. Davis explained that the ARCHZ regulation states that there must be a minimum of 20% "greenspace" within the project and that it can include landscaped areas. He noted that the regulation was written to allow for the Conservation Commission to give their advisory comments to the Planning & Zoning Commission primarily during the detailed site plan application process.

2. Budget Preparations for FY 2005-2006

The commission explained that at last month's meeting, Mark Joyse, member of the Board of Finance, explained that the BOF reviewed the Conservation Commission's request for \$1.75 million for open space purchases. He noted that the BOF preferred that the item be done as a separate question in a referendum as opposed to part of the Capital Improvement budget. Matt Davis did not believe that the Conservation Commission could "sponsor" a referendum for the open space expenditure. The commission agreed to discuss the matter further under item #3.

Matt Davis explained that the commission has approximately \$2,300 in the FY 04-05 budget remaining. He suggested that the commission use that money to hire a consultant to complete the open space plan. Mr. Davis noted that he understands and shares the commission's frustration with not being able to get the plan completed. He stated that he would investigate the requirements for hiring a consultant with the remaining budget.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION REQUESTED THAT THE TOWN PLANNER MOVE FORWARD WITH USING THE REMAINING 2004-2005 BUDGET TO HIRE A CONSULTANT TO COMPLETE THE OPEN SPACE PLAN.

The commission reviewed the FY 04-05 budget and discussed changes needed for the FY 05-06 budget. The commission will attend the 2/8/05 BOF meeting to present their request.

BY CONSENSUS, THE COMMISSION AGREED TO REQUEST THE FOLLOWING IN THEIR 05-06 BUDGET:

1) \$30,000—FOR PROFESSIONAL SERVICES, INCLUDING BUT NOT NECESSARILY LIMITED TO:

- **LAND RECORDS RESEARCH, LAND SURVEYS, APPRAISALS & LEGAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH OPEN SPACE PURCHASES, DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS, &/OR OTHER LAND PRESERVATION ACTIVITIES**
- **MAINTENANCE OF THE TOWN'S OPEN SPACE INVENTORY, INCLUDING UPDATES, DEVELOPMENT & DISTRIBUTION OF RELATED MAPPING (DIGITAL & HARD COPY)**
- **PUBLIC OUTREACH & FUNDRAISING EFFORTS (OPEN SPACE PLAN IMPLEMENTATION, AMENDMENTS, & COORDINATION WITH LAND TRUSTS, HOCKANUM RIVER WATERSHED ASSOCIATION, ETC.)**
- **RESEARCH, PREPARATION, & MANAGEMENT OF OPEN SPACE & OTHER AVAILABLE GRANTS**

2) \$1,000—COMMISSION TRAINING/EDUCATION

**3) \$250—TRAVEL ASSOCIATED WITH TRAINING/EDUCATION;
\$250—DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS;
\$1,250—ADVERTISING, PRINTING & FORMS**

TOTAL FY 05-06 REQUEST: \$32,750.

3. Discussion/Preparations Regarding Open Space Initiatives

The commission discussed the proposed cell tower on town-owned property located on Pinnacle Road. The commission asked for a copy of the Town Attorney's letter regarding the deed restriction. The commission felt that this land was for the purpose of open space,

regardless of the expiration of the grantors right to enforce limits on its use. Mr. Davis noted that the commission could provide comments to the BOS concerning their role generally and as to this specific matter. Also, the proposal will require PZC approvals and the commission was obviously free to provide input in those proceedings as well.

The commission continued its discussion of long range open space initiatives. They agreed to compile information/data to present to the BOF in support of substantial funding for open space purchases/preservation. The commission felt such efforts were consistent with the BOS directive to fully implement the Build Out Study recommendations, and that the up-front investment would pay dividends for many years.

Commissioner Gage presented land cover mapping from the "CLEAR" website, showing areas of Ellington, and generally reflecting forested, agricultural, and other areas of town.

III. ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED (HURLEY), SECONDED (MOODY) AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY TO ADJOURN THE SPECIAL MEETING AT 9:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Reanna Goodreau
Recording Secretary